

organizing a 17-man patrol, he immediately advanced upon a strategic slope essential to the security of his position and, boldly defying intense mortar, machinegun, and rifle fire which struck down 13 of his men, drove relentlessly forward with the remnants of his patrol to seize the vital ground. By his indomitable leadership, daring combat tactics, and valor in the face of overwhelming odds, Capt. Wilson succeeded in capturing and holding the strategic high ground in his regimental sector, thereby contributing essentially to the success of his regimental mission and to the annihilation of 350 Japanese troops. His inspiring conduct throughout the critical periods of this decisive action sustains and enhances the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Service.

Mr. COCHRAN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, as we bring this week to a close and look back, I am pleased with the progress that has been made on the Energy bill which we have completed, in essence, except for final passage which we will do Tuesday. Then we are ahead of what I initially anticipated, having proceeded to our first appropriations bill, the Interior appropriations.

The bill, as has been mentioned, is an excellent bill. I congratulate both the leaders on that bill, the chairman and the ranking member on the Interior Subcommittee, for their superb shepherding of this bill through their subcommittee, and now bringing it to the floor. I also thank the committee for reporting a bill that keeps to the spending allocation under this year's budget resolution.

As we travel back home, and as we will see when we go back during the Fourth of July recess, the American people expect us to adhere to that budget, a very strict spending budget, a budget on which Chairman GREGG led, and we passed, the fastest budget we have ever passed but, more important than that, a budget that shows fiscal discipline. Indeed, the ranking member and chairman of the subcommittee adhered to that allocation throughout. Senators BURNS and DORGAN have worked hard to be responsible stewards of American taxpayer dollars. At the same time it is reflected in the bill the importance of being stewards of the natural wonders and the heritage and the beauty of our great country. I thank Senator BURNS and Senator DORGAN for their hard work.

It is our first bill as we approach the appropriations process. It is the first of 12 newly constituted appropriations bills that we will consider. It is my hope to see all 12 of these bills passed. We need to do our very best to avoid

the scenario that has unfolded all too often in recent years. Come November or December, we should not have to resort to an omnibus bill that lumps all of these individual bills that we wouldn't have been able to pass into a single bill. We are going to do everything possible to systematically address each one of these bills as they come along, and then be able to pass them to avoid coming to what has almost become customary, and that is an omnibus process.

It has been a decade, 10 years, not since 1995, since all appropriations bills were wrapped up before beginning the fiscal year. Over that last decade, the average was sending only 2.1 appropriations bills to the President for his signature before the beginning of the fiscal year, only 2. Actually it was 2.1, as I mentioned, appropriations bills.

We need to do better. We can do better, and we will do better. We need to get the job done—get every bill done right and done on time. I am very optimistic we can do that. This year, we passed the budget, as I mentioned, in the fastest time in history. That budget establishes an overall 2006 spending ceiling for all appropriations bills. And because of that ceiling, because of all of us working together, and by working together, I am hopeful that the process will proceed smoothly. We have initiated that process today with the Interior Appropriations bill. As we considered the bill before us today, I want to leave with a special place I think of when I contemplate what my vote on this bill means for America.

On a second issue, as we look to the appropriations bill that is likely and almost certain to follow the Interior Appropriations bill, I want to comment very briefly and introduce what we will see at the end of next week, and that is a comment on homeland security.

As September 11 so tragically demonstrated, protecting our borders—whether by air, by sea, or by land—has taken on a level of urgency and importance as never before. When you are talking to people at home, it arises again and again—it is almost the first, second, or third question at every town meeting we hold—border security.

Border security is no longer just an immigration issue or a customs issue. Border security must be a unified and coordinated strategy to thwart terrorism, which is something we didn't think about prior to September 11 nearly as much as we do today—thwarting terrorism and enforcing the laws.

Next week, we will debate the Homeland Security Appropriations bill, and we must include the necessary resources to meet these challenges.

This bill will address concerns regarding insecurity of our borders, which we know in fact does threaten national security. It is time to address that issue. We will again do that next week.

As we all know, each year thousands of people cross our borders illegally.

The vast majority seek little more than better lives for their families, which we understand. But some do bring drugs. Some do traffic in human beings. Some may even have ties to terrorist groups. We don't know exactly how many come or will come. We don't know exactly what their backgrounds are. We don't know who might harm us. In today's time, that is wrong.

We know one thing: If drug dealers and human traffickers can operate on our borders, terrorists can as well. Our national security requires a safer and more secure border, and it is up to us to deliver that.

We face a crisis. Over 7,000 miles of land stretch across our borders. If you look at our ports, they handle as many as 16 million cargo containers; and 330 million noncitizens—students, visitors, and workers—cross our borders each year; 330 million noncitizens go back and forth across the borders. An unprecedented flow of illegal immigrants, criminals, terrorists, and unsecured cargo crosses our borders.

As representatives of the people, we need to focus on the rule of law. We will be focusing on that rule of law. This Nation is founded on the concept that all men are created equal and all have the inalienable right to be free. But those freedoms are protected by our institutions and these institutions require respect for the rule of law.

Those illegal immigrants who may wish us no harm have still violated our rule of law. We must remember this as this debate unfolds on border security next week.

Finally, America has always opened our doors to immigrants. We must continue to do so and we will continue to do so. People come to America looking for a better life, and we live better lives because of them. They contribute to our economy. They help weave that rich cultural fabric that makes up our society. But we must ensure that immigrants who come to America come here legally.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana is recognized.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for such time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the Senator is recognized.

MONTANA'S ROCKY MOUNTAIN FRONT

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise to address an amendment that is very important to me and my State relating to Montana's magnificent Rocky Mountain front. I filed the amendment to the Energy bill and, even though we are not on the bill at the moment, I will talk about the amendment. I will speak about what it would have accomplished because I will not press for action on this amendment. Rather, I will offer it at a later time.

So what is the front? The front, as we call it back home, is one of the largest